

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

1. MALAYAN TREE SHREWS *TUPAIA GLIS* (DIARD) IN SIKKIM

During a visit to Sikkim, to appraise the assessment of a river valley project from mid-March to mid-April, 1999, I had the opportunity of sighting tree shrews in the Teesta valley. The almost completely uniform brown colour and fluffy tail confirmed that they were Malayan tree shrews (*Tupaia glis*). Prater (THE BOOK OF INDIAN ANIMALS, 1993) defines the distribution range of the species from Myanmar (Burma), through Assam into the eastern Himalayas where it is known to inhabit a wide range of altitudes about 350 to 1,830 m and comments that they are easily distinguished from Indian tree shrews (*Anathana ellioti*) by the lack of nearly white ventral surface which is present in the latter. Subsequently, I had an opportunity to visit Gangtok (1,850 m above msl) during the period mentioned above, where I saw a few more individuals of the Malayan tree shrew.

Three races of Malayan tree shrews have been described in India namely *assamensis*,

versural and *lepcha* (Prater 1993). However, identification of the race, of the individuals sighted, was not possible during this visit. A senior forest official, Mrs. Usha Ganguli-Lachungpa of the Sikkim Forest Department, confirmed that tree shrews are commonly found in the state, but no research has been done on the species so far.

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2. RANGE OVERLAP IN DHOLE *CUON ALPINUS* PALLAS AND WOLF *CANIS LUPUS* LINN. (FAMILY: CANIDAE), IN INDIA

We present here our observations on range overlap of dhole (*Cuon alpinus*) and wolf (*Canis lupus*) in certain parts of India and discuss the possible reasons for the observed pattern.

In India, dhole is found commonly in the forests of the Western Ghats, and parts of the fragmented forests of the Eastern Ghats in the southern states, most forested areas of central Indian highlands and the moist forests of Orissa and Bihar states (Johnsingh 1985). Dhohes are also reported from other places, but are not as commonly found. Johnsingh (1985) observes that their preferred habitat is dense forest, interspersed with open land, as well as sparsely wooded forest with adequate prey and water.

Wolves are distributed commonly in the northwestern arid areas, central Indian highlands

and in the Deccan plateau of India. The population is almost continuous within the states of Gujarat, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh (Jhala 1993). Scrubland and grassland of the semi-arid parts of peninsular India are the preferred habitats. However, as an exception, an eastern wolf population occurs in the moist forests of Orissa and Bihar (Jhala 1993). Jhala (1993) also observes that the wolves usually do not occur in closed forests, but sometimes do occur on the periphery of such forested areas. In the Indian trans-Himalayan areas, different subspecies of both dhole and wolf are sympatric (Fox and Chundawat 1992).

From these accounts, it is evident that the geographical ranges of dhole and wolf do overlap,